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English Hubs

Westgarth English Hub

EARLY LANGUAGE AND LITERACY SPECIALIST INFORMATION PACK 2026/7



 www.westgarthprimaryschool.co.uk/westgarth-english-hub/

 Englishhub@westgarthenglishhub.co.uk

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RECRUITMENT 2026-2027



WHO WE ARE

Westgarth English Hub is one of only 34 English Hubs across England, appointed by the Department for Education. We are recognised for our expertise in the teaching of reading and for the leading role we play in supporting schools to strengthen their provision for language and oracy, phonics, reading and writing, as well as developing a rich and sustainable reading culture. Our work is driven by a strong moral purpose. We focus particularly on supporting the lowest-attaining pupils, ensuring that every child succeeds, regardless of background, additional needs or ability. We believe that high-quality early literacy teaching is fundamental to equity, opportunity and lifelong learning.

As an English Hub, our support is grounded in the most up-to-date evidence and aligns with the three core aims of the English Hubs programme. We work alongside schools to evaluate, refine and strengthen their practice, building sustainable capacity and confident leadership in literacy. We collaborate with schools through intensive support partnerships, light-touch support and high-quality professional development. Our team of experienced Literacy Specialists bring strong subject knowledge, practical classroom expertise and a commitment to reflective, evidence-informed practice.

Westgarth English Hub supports schools across:

- Darlington
- Hartlepool
- Middlesbrough
- Redcar and Cleveland
- Stockton-on-Tees
- Sunderland



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EXPECTATIONS AND FUNDING

Literacy Specialist Base School

Base schools working in partnership with Westgarth English Hub must have the capacity, expertise and commitment to release an Early Language and Literacy Specialist to deliver school-to-school support over the duration of the programme.

Early Language and Literacy Specialists are typically seconded from their base school through a flexible agreement, enabling them to work alongside other schools while maintaining strong links to classroom practice.

In addition, there is an opportunity for Literacy Specialists to work with the Hub on a self-employed basis. These individuals will have a strong educational background, hold all relevant qualifications, and bring significant experience in literacy, although they may not be currently employed within a school setting.

All applications must include a supporting statement from the applicant's Headteacher, confirming their commitment to release the member of staff for the required time.

Time Commitment

Secondment period: 1st September 2026 – 22nd July 2027, subject to agreement with the Headteacher and/or relevant managing party.

Initial training: 10th–11th September 2026.

Additional training: Further training dates and details will be shared in advance of the summer break.

Payment

Schools will receive payment at an SLE day rate of £375 per day, with an additional 0.2 allocation (£75) to cover the completion of associated paperwork for a Literacy Specialist support day. Other Hub activities will be paid at the standard SLE rate, in line with the time worked.

Specialists who are employed by a school/educational body and will continue to be paid through their usual payroll. Self-employed Literacy Specialists will be expected to submit a monthly invoice.

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APPLICATION PROCESS

Key Dates

Expression of Interest: 20th April 2026 – 14th May 2026

Recruitment pack released: 15th May 2026

Application window: 15th May 2026 – 1st June 2026

Closing date: 1st June 2026 at 12:00pm

How to apply

Applications must be submitted via email to REHEnglishhub@westgarthenglishhub.co.uk using the provided application template. Please note that CVs will not be accepted.

Interview Dates

- 18th June 2026
- 22nd June 2026
- 26th June 2026

Applicants should indicate their preferred interview date within their application.

Selection Process

The selection process will include a written application, presentation, scenario response and interview. Applicants who are shortlisted for interview will be provided with a clear brief outlining the focus of the short presentation to be delivered as part of the interview process.

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JOB DESCRIPTION

Purpose of the Role

The Early Language and Literacy Specialist (ELLS) plays a pivotal role in improving outcomes in communication, language and literacy by strengthening Reception practice in schools identified as requiring the highest levels of support.

The role focuses on delivering evidence-informed approaches to early literacy and supporting the effective implementation of early language programmes. Specialists work with schools to address gaps in oral language, vocabulary, comprehension and early writing, ensuring strong foundations for future learning.

Important:

Direct phonics support does not form part of this role. However, ELLS must have a secure understanding of effective phonics practice in order to identify potential concerns and ensure these are appropriately referred to English Hub Literacy Specialists.



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JOB DESCRIPTION

Key Responsibilities

Leadership and Representation

- Act as a lead professional, representing the values and principles of Westgarth English Hub
- Promote exemplary practice in early language and literacy within Reception settings

Delivery of Support

- Deliver high-quality training and school support, both virtually and face-to-face
- Provide intensive, in-school support for schools with the highest level of need, including modelling, coaching and supporting planning
- Work under the direction of the Hub Lead to ensure effective, targeted support

Assessment and Improvement Planning

- Conduct language and literacy audits to diagnose strengths and areas for development
- Develop and support the implementation of bespoke, evidence-informed action plans
- Use the Hub's quality assurance framework to monitor impact and maintain high standards

Programme Implementations

- Support effective delivery of early language programmes (e.g. NELI), including:
 - Screening
 - Group organisation
 - Progress monitoring
- Troubleshoot implementation challenges by sharing best practice and liaising with delivery partners where needed

Collaboration and School Improvement

- Work closely with headteachers and senior leaders to strengthen leadership of early language and literacy
- Set and support aspirational targets for Communication and Language and Literacy Early Learning Goals
- Ensure coherent and aligned support through collaboration with English Hub Literacy Specialists

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JOB DESCRIPTION

Key Responsibilities continued

Equity and Inclusion

- Maintain a strong focus on equity, improving outcomes for:
 - SEND pupils
 - EAL pupils
 - Disadvantaged pupils
- Champion the importance of speech, language and communication as a driver of long-term life outcomes

Engagement and Partnership Working

- Promote the work of Westgarth English Hub at local, regional and national level
- Work in partnership with Early Language Leads and Early Years networks to ensure continuity into Reception
- Support schools in developing effective partnerships with parents and carers

Professional Development and Accountability

- Engage fully in all CPD, training and Hub meetings
- Take responsibility for ongoing professional development to meet programme expectations
- Accurately record and submit all Hub activity within 24 hours of delivery
- Report regularly to the Hub Lead, celebrating success and escalating concerns promptly

Our Expectation

All Early Language and Literacy Specialists will uphold the values of the English Hub programme, ensuring that all work is rooted in evidence-based practice, drives meaningful impact and supports sustainable school improvement.

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PERSONAL SPECIFICATION

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	• Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) • Full UK driving licence	• Relevant postgraduate qualification • NPQ qualification
Professional Experience	• Current teacher with at least 3 years' experience in Early Years and/or Key Stage 1. • Excellent understanding of the EYFS and KS1 curriculum • Proven track record of delivering high-quality systematic synthetic phonics using an accredited SSP programme. • Demonstrable impact on pupil outcomes, particularly in early reading and phonics. • Experience of supporting colleagues to improve classroom practice through coaching, modelling and professional dialogue • Demonstration of high expectations of pupil and staff achievement/ how pupils catch up quickly in early reading and writing. • Demonstrates knowledge and application of the Reading and Writing Frameworks	• Experience of working beyond own school, e.g. school-to-school support, advisory work or partnership projects. • Experience of supporting schools with Phonics Screening Check outcomes. • Experience of contributing to literacy leadership or whole-school reading/oracy/writing strategy. • Experience of effective teaching across the key stages • Experience of teaching in schools with different contexts, such as high levels of disadvantage, mobility, EAL or SEND





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	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge and Understanding	- Secure understanding of effective phonics teaching and assessment. - Strong knowledge of early reading (fluency, comprehension, reading for pleasure). - Understanding of early language development. - Understanding of early writing development. - Awareness of strategies to support the lowest 20%. - Understanding of English Hub priorities.	- Knowledge of evidence-informed research related to literacy and early reading. - Understanding of quality assurance frameworks used to evaluate oracy, phonics, and/or reading provision.
Skills and Abilities	- Ability to model exemplary teaching practice with clarity and confidence. - Strong interpersonal and communication skills, able to build professional trust and challenge practice sensitively. - Ability to evaluate teaching and learning accurately and provide precise, actionable feedback. - Ability to support and develop reading leadership within schools. - Strong organisational skills, including accurate reporting and meeting deadlines. - Ability to work collaboratively as part of a hub team and under the direction of the Hub Lead.	- Experience of facilitating training or leading professional development for groups of teachers. - Knowledge of supporting children with SEND and EAL to develop communication and language, reading and writing. - Experience in team teaching/coaching in the moment to develop practice





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	Essential	Desirable
Personal Qualities	• Strong moral purpose and commitment to ensuring all children can have strong foundations in communication, language and literacy skills. • Highly reflective practitioner with a commitment to continuous improvement. • Flexible, resilient and solutions-focused. • Professional integrity and discretion. • Commitment to equality of opportunity and high expectations for all pupils, regardless of background or need.	• Enthusiasm for promoting a love of reading and reading for pleasure. • Willingness to contribute to the wider work and profile of the English Hub.



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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXPECTATIONS

Continuous Professional Development

At Westgarth English Hub, we are committed to ensuring that all Literacy Specialists engage in high-quality, ongoing professional development to maintain the highest standards of practice. Literacy Specialists will take responsibility for their own continuous professional development, working closely with the Hub Lead and Line Manager to ensure their practice remains current, reflective and aligned with the latest evidence and guidance in phonics, early reading and early language.

Participation in all English Hub training and development opportunities is a core expectation of the role. This includes mandatory training sessions, team meetings and wider professional learning opportunities, which are essential to effectively fulfil the responsibilities of the post. All required training dates will be communicated in advance and must be agreed with the post holder's Headteacher.

Successful candidates will be expected to:

- Engage fully in all internal and external training opportunities
- Contribute actively to Hub CPD, team meetings and professional learning communities
- Apply learning directly to their work with Partner Schools, ensuring meaningful impact

Professional Expectations

While this role profile outlines the main responsibilities, it is not exhaustive. The post holder will be expected to undertake any reasonable duties consistent with the level and purpose of the role, as directed by the Line Manager.

Literacy Specialists are expected to maintain a professional, courteous and welcoming approach at all times, acting as positive ambassadors for Westgarth English Hub when working with colleagues, schools and external partners.

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